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Message Text

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ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 L-02 PM-03 INR-09

CIAE-00 NSAE-00 RSR-01 RSC-01 DODE-00 IO-03 EUR-10

DPW-01 PRS-01 /069 W
---------- 079932
P R 161150 Z APR 73
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 228
INFO USDEL JEC PARIS
CINCPAC
DAO SAIGON
USSAG NKP RTAFB

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 6435

LIMDIS/ NOFORN

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MOPS, PINT, PINS, VS
SUBJECT: STATUS REPORT BY RVN DELEGATION TO TPJMC

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

1. EMBOFFS HAD LONG WIDE- RANGING DISCUSSION APRIL 14 WITH BG PHAN HOA HIEP, RVN DEPUTY CHIEF OF DELEGATION TO THE TPJMC. HIEP, ACCOMPANIED BY COLONEL NGHIA, SENIOR RVN DEL STAFF OFFICER, PROVIDED EXTREMELY FRANK AND FORTHCOMING EXPOSITION OF VIEWS ON A WIDE RANGE OF MATTERS RELATED TO TPJMC AND CEASE- FIRE, AND REQUESTED PROTECTION AS SOURCE IF VIEWS DISCUSSED OUTSIDE USG.

2. OUTLINING CURRENT MATTERS BEFORE THE TPJMC, HIEP MENTIONED THREE MAIN ISSUES: PROCEDURAL MATTERS; THE CEASE- FIRE, INCLUDING TON LE CHAN AND OTHER EXAMPLES OF COMMUNIST VIOLATION; AND PRISONERS AND DETAINEES. ON THE FIRST, SOME PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE IN A FEW AREAS, SUCH AS AGREEMENT ON SIZE OF CENTRAL DELEGATIONS, SUBCOMMITTEE OPERATION AND TECHNICAL MATTERS, BUT EVEN HERE RELATIVELY LITTLE HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED, WITH THE PRG USING WHAT THE RVN DEL CONSIDERS DELAYING TACTICS BY RAISING SUCH
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ISSUES AS MOVEMENT OF THE PRG DEL FROM DAVIS STATION TO DOWNTOWN SAIGON. WITH REGARD TO PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES, RVN HAD OFFERED TO CONFIRM 11 POINTS AGREED TO BY FPJMC AND NEGOTIATE ADDITIONAL PRIVILEGES AS REQUIRED FOLLOWING PRG DEPLOYMENT, BUT PRG HAD NOT AGREED.

3. RE CEASE- FIRE VIOLATIONS, HIEP SAID RVN DEL HAS DECIDED TO PUT EMPHASIS ON THREE PARTICULARLY FLAGRANT TEST CASES: A) TONG LE CHAN, WHICH REMAINS UNDER SIEGE AND WHICH RVN WILL CONTINUE TO RAISE AT EACH TPJMC MEETING PENDING SOME MEANINGFUL PROGRESS; B) RECENT ENEMY PRESSURES ON HONG NGU- TAN CHAU AREA; AND C) THE RECENT FORCED EVACUATION OF SUPPORT BASE HELEN 22 KMS. WEST OF HUE, WHICH ARVN HAD HELD SINCE BEFORE CEASE- FIRE. TONG LE CHAN FOR THE MOMENT IS THE KEY TEST, SINCE IT PUTS IN SHARP FOCUS CONTRASTING RVN AND PRG INTERPRETATIONS OF ARTICLE 4 OF THE CEASE- FIRE PROTOCOL RE MEETINGS OF LOCAL COMMANDERS. THE PRG CONTINUES TO INSIST ON A LOCAL MEETING OF OPPOSING COMMANDERS WITHOUT REPRESENTATIVES OF HIGHER AREA COMMANDS. THE RVN ON THE OTHER HAND SEES THIS INTERPRETATION AS RAISING SERIOUS GENERAL PROBLEMS; IN THE CASE OF TONG LE CHAN, IT WOULD REQUIRE THE ARVN MAJOR IN CHARGE TO NEGOTIATE FROM A POSITION OF WEAKNESS WITH A REGIMENTAL COMMANDER. THE RVN COUNTERPROPOSAL IS THAT IN TONG LE CHAN AND OTHER SITUATIONS, A LOCAL CEASE- FIRE BE NEGOTIATED THROUGH THE INTERMEDIARY OF TWO JMC COLONELS WITH EQUAL AUTHORITY, ONE FROM EACH SIDE. THIS PROPOSAL HAS BEEN REJECTED BY THE PRG, ALTHOUGH IT REPRESENTS A SIGNIFICANT SOFTENING OF THE PREVIOUS RVN INSISTENCE ON LIMITING SUCH CONTACTS TO CORPS & DIVISION COMMANDERS. (IN ONE INSTANCE IN KONTUM, HOWEVER, THERE HAVE BEEN AUTHORIZED DIVISION- LEVEL CONTACTS WHICH HAVE PRODUCED A LOCAL ARRANGEMENT OF LIMITED SCOPE.)

4. DEADLOCK ON THE PRISONER- DETAINEE ISSUE CONTINUES. THE PRG IS ATTEMPTING TO LINK RETURN OF 210 FORMER POWS WHO HAVE ASKED TO REMAIN IN RVN UNDER CHIEU HOI PROGRAM WITH RELEASE OF 410 ARVN PRISONERS STILL HELD BY PRG. TO RESOLVE ANY DOUBTS ABOUT AUTHENTICITY OF RALLIERS, RVN HAS OFFERED TO PERMIT INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS BY ICCS AND TPJMC OF THE 210, BUT PRG HAS REFUSED. PRG HAS FURTHER SOUGHT TO LINK POW ISSUE WITH RELEASE OF CIVILIAN DETAINEES AND CONTINUES TO CLAIM THAT RVN IS HOLDING MORE THAN 100,000 CIVILIAN PRISONERS, BUT HAS FAILED TO RESPOND TO AN RVN CHALLENGE TO PRODUCE NAMES OR PARTICULARS OF VC ALLEGEDLY IMPRISONED.

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5. HIEP SURPRISED EMBOFFS BY STATING THAT RVN HAS MORE THAN ONCE RAISED ISSUE OF AREAS OF CONTROL WITHIN TPJMC, INDICATING THAT RVN IS PREPARED TO UNDERTAKE DRAWING OF MAPS, ETC. RVN PRECONDIHHON TO THIS, HOWEVER, IS WILLINGNESS OF PRG TO ABIDE BY ARTICLE 3 (B) OF AGREEMENT AND TO KEEP ITS FORCES IN PLACE.

6. A FURTHER OBSTACLE TO AN EFFECTIVE CEASE- FIRE, IN THE VIEW OF BOTH HIEP AND NGHIA, HAS BEEN THE APPARENT LINKAGE TO PRG INTRANSI-GENCE AND POLISH/ HUNGARIAN OBSTRUCTIONISM WITHIN THE ICCS. EMBOFFS INFORMED THEM THAT UNHELPFUL ROLE PLAYED THUS FAR BY POLES AND HUNGARIANS HAD TWICE BEEN THE SUBJECT OF HIGH- LEVEL USG REPRESENTATIONS TO THOSE GOVERNMENTS. RVN DEL WAS URGED TO BEAR IN MIND THAT, EVEN IN PRESENT SITUATION, ICCS WAS OF SUB-STANTIAL USE IN MONITORING EVENTS AND THAT LESS- THAN- UNANIMOUS REPORTS COULD STILL HAVE THEIR IMPACT. EMBOFFS URGED RVN TO CON-TINUE TO MAKE ITS CASE AS EFFECTIVELY AS POSSIBLE WITH ICCS AND, BEYOND THAT, TO SEEK TO USE PRESS AND MEDIA TO PRESENT IT TO REST OF WORLD.

7. HIEP AND NGHIA ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS NOTED THAT THE ABSENCE OF GENERAL TRA HAD FOR THE TIME FURTHER MINIMIZED CHANCES OF PROGRESS IN TPJMC. TRA' S WHEREABOUTS ARE CURRENTLY UNKNOWN AND IN HIS ABSENCE THE INEPT ACTING CHIEF, GENERAL TUAN, HAS SHOWN HIMSELF TO HAVE NEITHER THE AUTHORITY NOR THE ABILITY TO NEGOTIATE USEFULLY. BOTH HIEP AND NGHIA SEE TRA AS A TOUGH, SMART, SUBTLE ADVERSARY, BUT BOTH ALSO APPEAR TO BELIEVE THAT, AS A SOUTHERNER, HE IS A POSSIBLE KEY TO A SOLUTIBA TO THE SITUATION IN SOUTH VIET- NAM. RVN REPS APPEARED TO HOPE THAT REAL PROGRESS MIGHT BE POSSIBLE THROUGH SECRET TALKS WITH RESPONSIBLE PRG ELEMENTS.

8. IN THIS CONNECTION, HIEP AND NGHIA ALSO RAISED THE QUESTION OF US- PRG CONTACTS, EXPRESSING THE BELIEF THAT MORE MIGHT BE AC-

COMPLISHED BY DEALING DIRECTLY WITH THE SOUTHERN COMMUNISTS AND CUTTING HANOI OUT OF THE ACTION. ALL PRESENT ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THIS WOULD OBVIOUSLY PRESENT DIFFICULTIES FOR THE RVN WHICH WOULD HAVE TO BE CONSIDERED CAREFULLY.

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9. DETAILED MEMCON FOLLOWS.
BUNKER

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TAGS: MOPS, PINS, PINT
To: CINCPAC
DAO SAIGON
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JEC PARIS
SECSTATE WASHDC
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